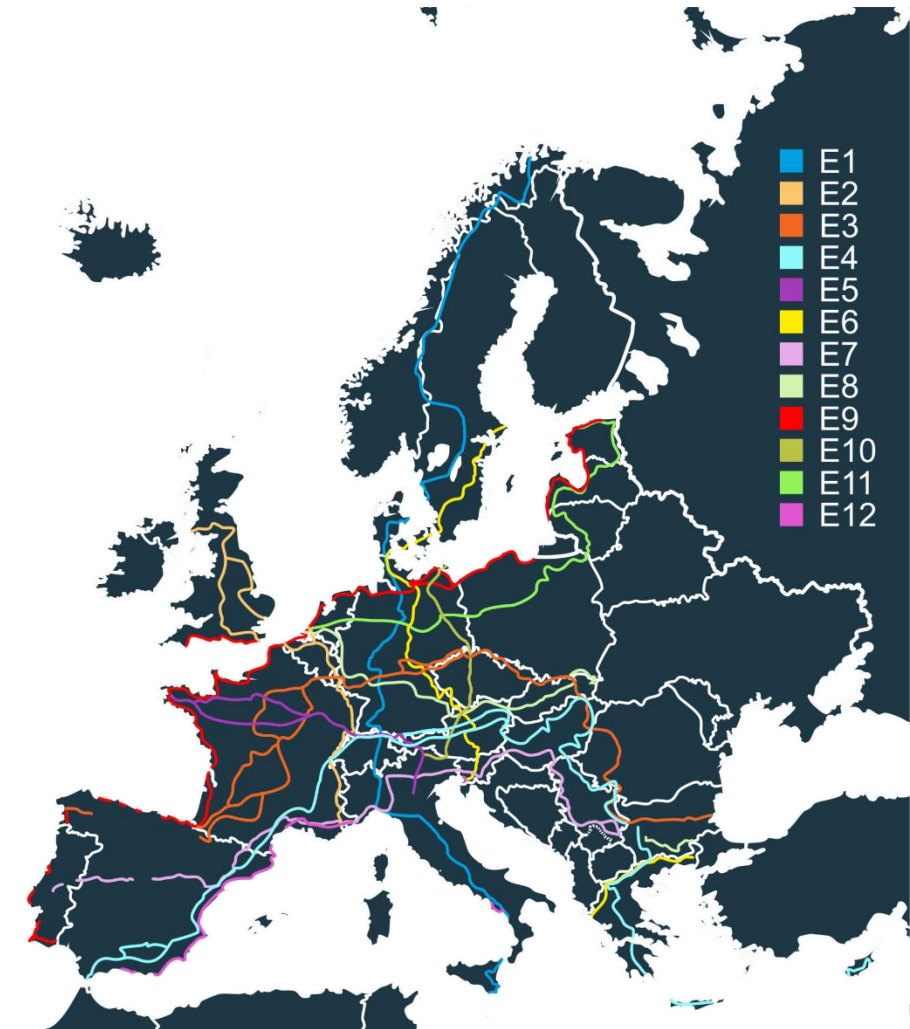




# European Ramblers' Association

- Founded on 19 Oct. **1969** in Germany by 8 organisations from 5 countries (BE, CH, DE, FR, LU)
- Today: ERA is an umbrella association of **64** organisations from **33** European countries (in and out of EU)
- Focus on **12 European long-distance paths** crossing Europe and **Leading Quality Trails – Best of Europe**





**ERA·EWV·FERP**

# European Ramblers' Association

- Organisation of the European walking events [EURORANDO](#), cross-border walks
- [Conferences and seminars](#) focused on waymarking and webinars on specific topics connected with the walking, nature and sustainability:
  - \* [Access to nature](#)
  - \* [General Principles for Waymarking](#)
- European [certification of the walk leaders](#)
- Certification of trails “[Leading Quality Trails - Best of Europe](#)” – created in cooperation with the Deutscher Wanderverband Service



# Why do we need hiking trails in Europe



Hiking trails are vital for Europe, offering benefits like:

1. **Preservation of nature:** They help conserve biodiversity and habitats.
2. **Cultural heritage:** Trails connect historical sites and promote cultural continuity.
3. **Regional development:** They boost local economies through sustainable tourism.
4. **Health and well-being:** Trails improve mental and physical health.
5. **Cross-border unity:** Trails foster cooperation and unity across nations.
6. **Climate action:** They promote environmental education and stewardship.

These trails enhance connectivity, sustainability, and well-being, uniting Europe through its natural and cultural landscapes.

For more details, visit [era-ewv-ferp.org/why-do-we-need-hiking-trails-in-europe/](https://era-ewv-ferp.org/why-do-we-need-hiking-trails-in-europe/)

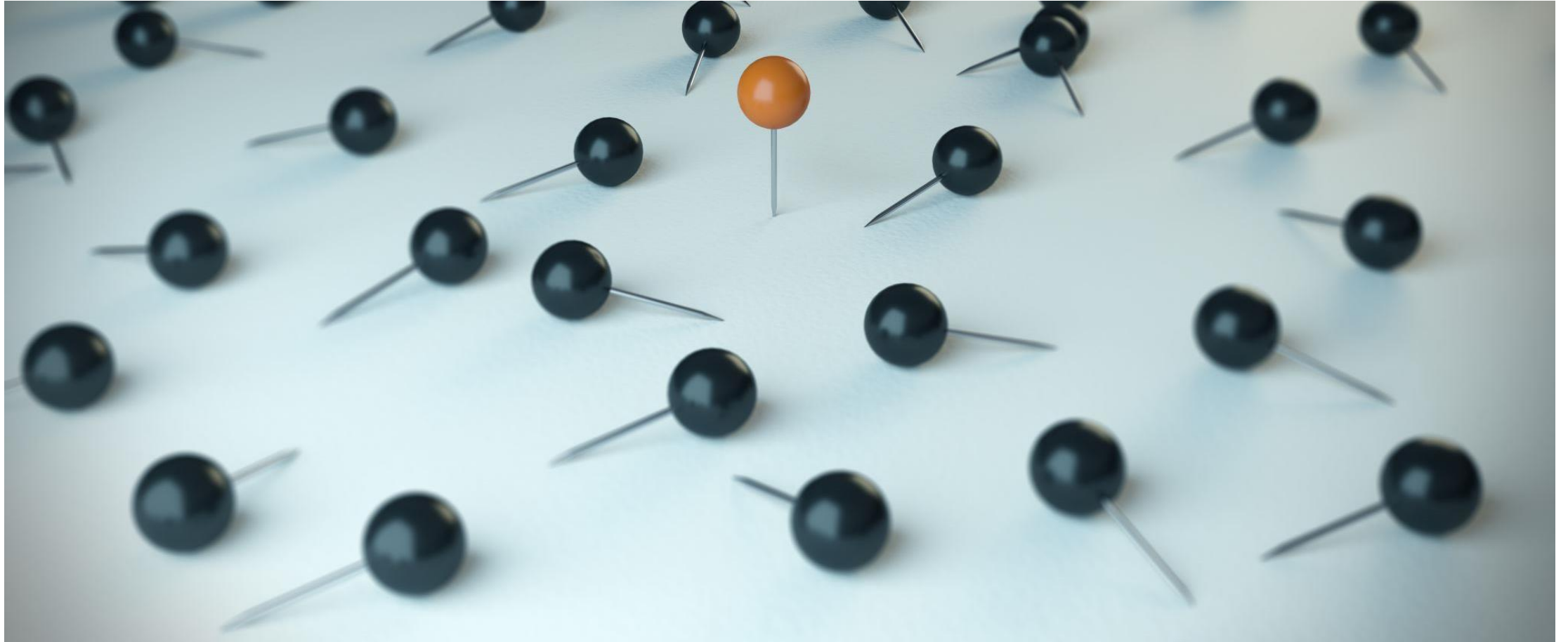


# Paths connect people, cultures, and nature

- **People:** Hiking trails bring individuals together, fostering community and shared experiences.
- **Cultures:** Trails link diverse cultural landmarks, allowing hikers to explore and appreciate Europe's rich heritage.
- **Nature:** Paths promote environmental stewardship, encouraging the protection and enjoyment of natural landscapes.

Paths serve as vital conduits, enhancing understanding, unity, and conservation across Europe.

# Programs



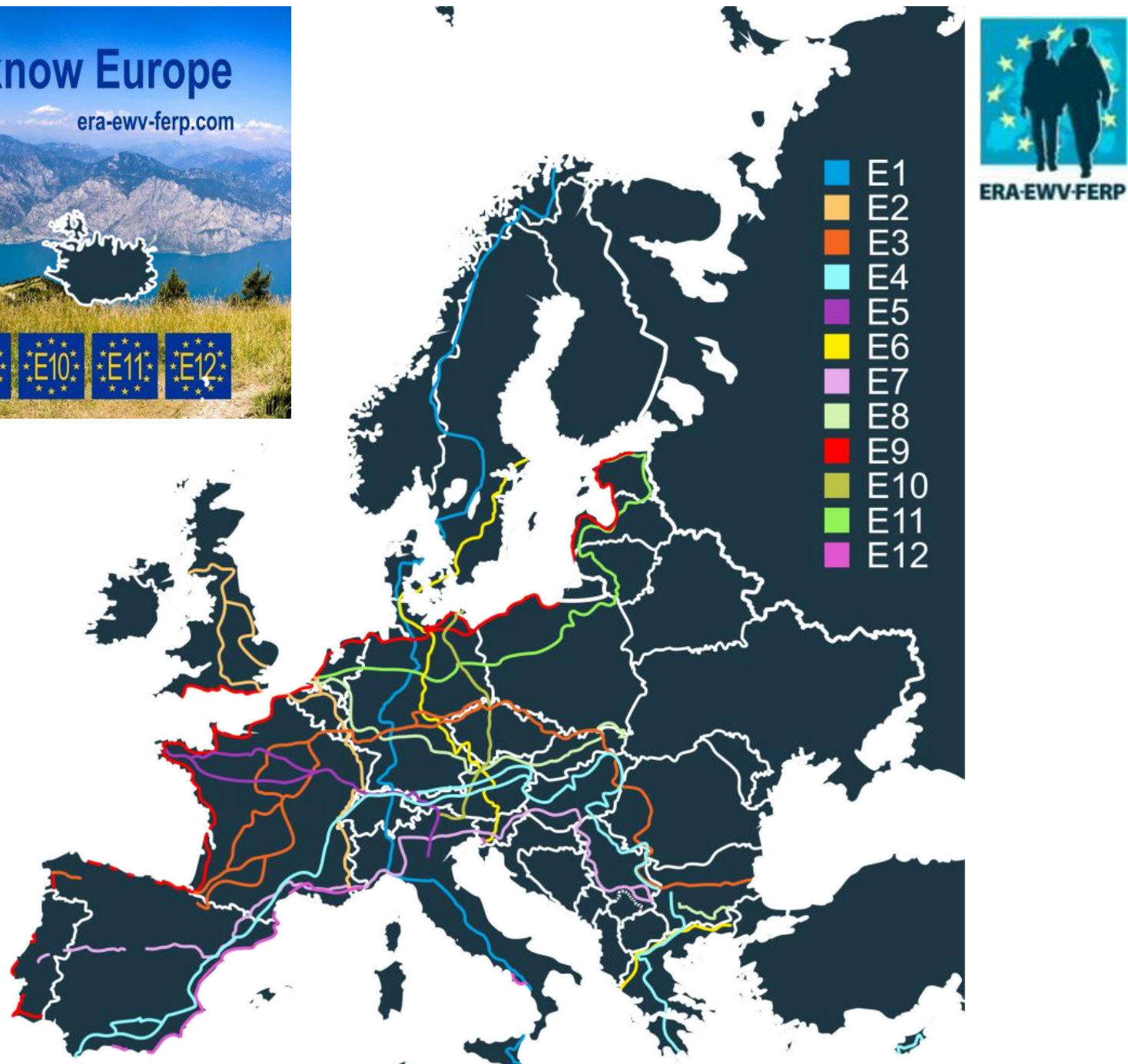


[E-paths.org](http://E-paths.org)

**12 European paths  
75.000 km**

**Verified E-paths are very popular**

**Verified E-paths are also promoted as  
excellent trails for extended weekends and  
short holidays.**



# Verified E-paths



- **Verified E-paths** are maintained to high standards, ensuring a quality experience for all hikers.
- **Collaborative Efforts:** The establishment and upkeep of these paths are made possible with the valuable help and assistance from ERA's member organizations. These partnerships ensure that the trails are not only well-maintained but also meet the standards set by the ERA.
- **Cultural and Natural Exploration:** Each trail offers unique insights into the regions it traverses, enhancing the hikers connection to the continent's heritage.
- **Planning and Preparation:** The hiker benefit from detailed route descriptions, maps, and validated information provided by ERA and the member organisations.
- **Sustainability and Responsibility:** The Verified E-paths commit to responsible hiking practices that preserve the natural and cultural integrity of the trails. ERA and the member organisations promote sustainability and respect for local environments and communities.

# The Leading Quality Trails (LQT) family

## Best of Europe

[lqt-be.org](http://lqt-be.org)







# Leading Quality Trails – Best of Europe DAY WALK

4 - 25 km



**S** starting point

## Main elements

- Variety
- Good Surface
- POIs
- Marking
- Signposting





# Leading Quality Trails – Best of Europe DAY WALK Steps in the quality process



english

**Know-How Transfer  
+ Analysis**



**Training of experts in  
the region**

**Data collection by  
experts**

**Improvements**

**Application for  
certification**

**Data assessment**

**Local spot  
checks**



**Application +  
Inspection**





# ERA·EWV·FERP

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# RECOMMENDS



ERA and our member organisations are the experts in walking, hiking and rambling across Europe.

**Explore Europe's hidden gems on foot with ERA Recommends, your expert guide to unforgettable walking adventures.**

# ERA Recommendations for exceptional hiking experiences



- **Verified E-paths:** Explore Europe's diverse landscapes and cultures through long-distance footpaths that connect the continent. Verified E-paths are quality-assured, providing reliable, scenic, and culturally rich hiking experiences.
- **Leading Quality Trails:** For premium hiking trails that meet high standards of quality and experience, consider the Leading Quality Trails. These trails are designed to offer beautiful natural scenery, well-marked paths, and convenient logistics, including luggage transportation.

# Initiatives and ideas



# ERA's Sustainable Hiking Project: Paving the Way for a Greener Tomorrow

Our vision is simple yet powerful: to create a sustainable hiking experience that leaves a **positive impact on nature, culture, and communities.**

We envision a Europe where every hiking trail is a corridor of ecological preservation, a pathway to cultural appreciation, and a source of socio-economic vitality.

## The Green Trail Certification System

**Sustainable hiking and responsible outdoor tourism**



**Green Trails**  
*Powered by ERA-EWV-FERP*

# Green Trails Criteria



## **5 areas:**

1. Environmental Sustainability
2. Cultural and Heritage Preservation
3. Safety and Accessibility
4. Responsible Visitor Behavior
5. Community Engagement and Economic Impact

## **4 levels:**

- Level 1: Green Trail Starter
- Level 2: Green Trail Intermediate
- Level 3: Green Trail Advanced
- Level 4: Green Trail Excellence



# Hike Green Europe

As part of ERA's ongoing commitment to promoting sustainable practices and enhancing public health through hiking, the second half of 2024 will focus on **testing and refining the Green Trails criteria and preparing for the broader "Hike Green Europe" initiative.**

This phase will involve practical implementation, stakeholder engagement, data collection, and the development of a comprehensive framework to integrate into an Erasmus+ project from 2025 (or 2026).



# References



- [ERA Programs](#)
- Program: [E-paths](#)
- Program: [Leading Quality Trails – Best of Europe](#)
- Program: [ERA Recommends](#)
- Initiative: [Green Trails](#) and Hike Green Europe
- [ERA-EUMA 3rd Trail Conference](#), November 2024,  
Paris

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